

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRAGUE 02104 01 OF 02 300909Z

11

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 107159

P 291545Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6850

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRAGUE 2104

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, CZ

SUBJECT: CLAIMS AGREEMENT SIGNING CEREMONY

REF: STATE 187603

1. SUMMARY. CHARGE DELIVERED MESSAGE AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL. CZECHS PROMISED FORMAL REPLY EARLY NEXT WEEK. THERE COULD CONCEIVABLE BE SOME PROBLEMS IN GETTING FINAL AGREEMENT READY FOR SIGNING AND IN CHNOUPEK'S SHCHEDULE. ALTHOUGH CZECH ATTITUDE IS POSITIVE, THEY ARE CLEARLY DISAPPOINTED NOT TO GET AN INVITATION FOR A SEPARATE VISIT BY CHNOUPEK. THEY STILL HOPE STRONGLY THAT CHNOUPKE VISIT, EVEN IF DURING UNGA, WILL STILL BE SUBSTANTIVE, GOING BEYOND SIGNING CEREMONY ONLY. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT CHNOUPEK TRIP BE PLANNED AS SUBSTANTIVE VISIT, TO INCLUDE TALKS WITH THE SECRETARY AND OTHER USG OFFICIALS. END SUMMARY.

2. CHARGE SPOKE TO ZANTOVSKY, HEAD SIXTH DEPARTMENT, MFA, AS INSTRUCTED REFTEL AUG 29.

3. ZANTOVSKY SAID HE APPRECIATED VERY MUCH THE SECRETARY'S INVITATION TO CHNOUPKE, AND FULLY AGREED THAT AN EXPEDITIOUS END TO THE LONG CLAIMS NEGOTIATIONS WAS DESIRABLE. NEVERTHELESS HE CONFESSED TO BEING DISAPPOINTED IN OUR MESSAGE, BECAUSE WHAT HIS GOVERNMENT HOPED FOR WAS NOT MERETH A
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 02104 01 OF 02 300909Z

SIGNING CEREMONY BUT SUBSTANTIVE TALKS IDEALLY DURING A

SEPARATE VISIT FOLLOWING UNGA) MARKING THE START OF REAL IMPROVEMENT IN US-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS. HE SAID HE WOULD CONSULT WITH CHNOUPEK AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY (CHNOUPEK IS NOW IN SLOVAKIA FOR THE ANNIVERSARY FETE OF THE SLOVAK NATIONAL UPRISING) AND GAVE US A FORMAL REPLY.

4. MEANWHILE, ZANTOVSKY SAID, ALTHOUGH HE COULD AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO THE PROPOSED VISIT, HE WOULD RAISE THREE QUESTIONS. (HE STRESSED THAT IN DOING SO, HE WAS SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF, NOT FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTER, PENDING HIS DISCUSSION WITH CHNOUPEK.) FIRST, COULD WE FINISH THE WORK ON ANNEXES A AND B AND THE NECESSARY BUREAUCRATIC PREPARATION IN ORDER TO BE READY TO SIGN IN SEPTEMBER. HE THROUGH THERE WERE NO MAJOR PROBLEMS IN OUR DRAFT ANNEXES, BUT HIS EXPERTS WERE MEETING AUG 29 AND HE WOULD NOT KNOW FOR SURE UNTIL THE MEETING WAS HELD. A GOOD DEAL OF RED TAPE REMAINED TO BE UNSNARLED. SECOND, WOULD CHNOUPEK'S SCHEDULE FIT OUR PROPOSAL. ZANTOVSKY SAID IN CONFIDENCE THAT A NEW ELEMENT HAD ARISEN, NAMELY THE POSSIBILITY OF CHNOUPKE'S ACCOMPANYING HUSAK WHEN HE VISITED FINLAND SEPT 16-19. THIS HAD NOT BEEN FORMALLY DECIDED, BUT IF IT WAS, THEN CHNOUPEK WOULD NOT ARRIVE IN US UNTIL ABOUT SEPT 21. HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN CHNOUPEK PLANNED TO RETURN, BUT WOULD OFFER OCT 10 AS

UNOFFICIAL GUESS. THIS WAS A TIGHT TIME FRAME.

5. THIRD, AND MOST IMPORTANT, ZANTOVSKY STRESSED THAT THEY HOPED FOR NOT MERELY A SIGNING BUT A SUBSTANTIVE VISIT. WERE WE PROPOSING MERELY A CEREMONY? CHARGE SAID HIS CONSTRUCTIONS IMPLIED THAT MERELY A CEREMONY WAS CONTEMPLATED, BUT NOT SPECIFIC ON THIS POINT. CHARGE WENT ON TO SPEAK OF THE SECRETARY'S CROWDED SCHEDULE (INCLUDING THE GIEREK AND POPOV VISITS). HE SAID THAT PERSONALLY, AS HE HAD TOLD ZANTOVSKY BEFORE, HE THOUGHT A SUBSTANTIVE VISIT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL, BUT HE RECOGNIZED, AS HE WAS SURE ZANTOVSKY DID, THAT THE SECRETARY HAD A GREAT MANY DEMANDS UPON HIM.() MOREOVER, THERE WERE CLEAR ADVANTAGES IN GETTING THE CLAIMS AGREEMENT SIGNED AND SEALED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

6. ZANTOVSKY THEN SPOKE EARNESTLY AND AT LENGTH ABOUT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRAGUE 02104 01 OF 02 300909Z

HIS GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO HAVE BETTER RELATIONS WITH US. HE READ FROM A RECENT CABLE FROM THEIR EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON DESCRIBING SOME STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS' COMPLAINTS ABOUT LACK OF CZECH ACTION ON DIVIDED FAMILIES, ABOUT NEGATIVE CZECH PRESS COVERAGE OF THE US, AND ABOUT A GENERAL FEELING THAT THE CZECHS WERE DOING LESS FOR DETENTE THAN ANYONE ELSE IN EE. ZANTOVSKY TOOK STRONG ISSUE WITH THIS STATEMENT, AND SPOKE ABOUT HIS WON

ACTIVITY IN THE DIVIDED FAMILIES MATTER AS WELL AS THE MFA'S POSITIVE ATTITUDE ON EXHIBITS, ON THE EMBASSY'S WREATH-LAYING IN SLOVAKIA, AND SO ON. CHARGE SAID HE HAD TO AGREE WITH ZANTOVSKY ON SOME OF THESE POINTS, AND SPECIFICALLY HE THOUGHT, AS EMBASSY HAD REPORTED TO WASHINGTON, THAT WITH SOME DEFINITE EXCEPTIONS CZECH PRESS COVERAGE OF THE US DURING PRESIDENT FORD'S ACCESSION HAD BEEN GENERALLY FAIR. ZANTOVSKY SAID MFA WAS DOING ITS BEST IN THESE MATTERS, AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO, WHATEVER HAPPENED WITH RESPECTS TO CHANOUPEK'S PLANS. WHAT HIS GOVERNMENT WANTED, HE SAID, WAS CHANCE TO DISCUSS POLICY SERIOUSLY AND TO DEMONSTRATE GREAT CZECHOSLOVAK INTEREST IN CONTINUING TO NORMALIZE AND BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. IN TRADE AREA PARTICULARLY, HE THOUGHT US AND HIS COUNTRY HAD MUCH MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL WORK TO DO TOGETHER; FOR EXAMPLE, IN GATT, HE THOUGHT CZECHS COULD WORK WITH US ON MANY PROBLEMS. PERRY

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 02104 02 OF 02 300752Z

12

ACTION SS-30

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P 291455Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6851

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PRAGUE 2104

EXDIS

7. SPECIFICALLY, WHAT CZECHS HOPED FOR WAS VISIT THAT WOULD INCLUDE SERIOUS TALKS WITH THE SECRETARY; IF POSSIBLE, A COURTESY CALL ON THE PRESIDENT; MEETINGS WITH MR. RUSH AND SECRETARY DENT AND SOME CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS; POSSIBLE PRESS CONFERENCES; AND IDEALLY A VISIT TO A SECOND CITY BESIDES WASHINGTON.

8. ZANTOVSKY WAS AT PAINS TO STRESS (A) THAT HE WOULD GIVE US A FORMAL REPLY AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, PROBABLY EARLY NEXT WEEK, AND (B) THAT DESPITE A CERTAIN DISAPPOINT-

MENT, THE CZECHOSLOVAK OUTLOOK WAS VERY POSITIVE ABOUT THE PROPOSED SIGNING AND ABOUT US-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS. HE ASKED CHARGE TO REPORT HIS VIEWS (PENDING FORMAL REPLY) AND TO ASK WASHINGTON TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT KING THE CHNOUPEK VISIT NOT MERELY A SIGNING CEREMONY BUT SOMETHING OF SUBSTANCE. HE SAID, "PLEASE ASSURE THE SECRETARY WE ARE DOING AS MUCH AS WE ARE ABLE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE RELATIONS WE ARE CREATING."

9. COMMENT: WE AT THE EMBASSY ARE AWARE OF THE TREMENDOUS PRESSURES UPON THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE THIS FALL, AND HAVING HEARD OF THE POPOV AND GIEREK VISITS WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAT US-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS MUST TAKE THEIR PROPER PLACES IN A LARGER POLICY PICTURE. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE IT IS NOT LOCALITIS WHEN WE URGE THE DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER MAKING THIS VISIT SOMETHING OF GENUINE SUBSTANCE THAT WILL MARK AN IMPROVEMENT IN US-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS WHICH WE BELIEVE IS TAKING PLACE. WITH SVOBODA SO ILL, AND
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 02104 02 OF 02 300752Z

A RECONFIRMATION OR REALIGNMENT OF THE LEADERSHIP BOUND TO TAKE PLACE, WE THINK THIS IS THE TIME TO ENCOURAGE THE HSUAK TEAM THAT DETENTE CAN WORK FOR HIS COUNTRY TOO. SUCH ENCOURAGEMENT WILL ALSO, IN THE LONG RUN, GIVE A LITTLE HEART TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY, AND GOD KNOWS THEY CAN USE IT. AS WE SEE IT, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, DESPITE BEING ON A SHORT SOVIET LEASH, CAN BENEFIT FROM US GESTURES IN STAKING OUT A MORE INDEPENDENT WAY. IF WE EXPECT THEM TO DO SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT FOR US BEFORE WE CONSENT TO (5534 43)-589, , WE ARE PROBABLY ASKING MORE THAN THEY CAN GIVE RIGHT NOW.

10. RECOMMENDATION. WE RECOMMEND THAT WE MEET THE CZECHOSLOVAKS HALFWAY AND PLAN FOR CHNOUPEK TO HOLD TALKS WITH THE SECRETARY AND OTHER OFFICIALS AND, IF HIS SCHEDULE PERMITS, TO MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT BRIEFLY. WE KNOW THAT AMBASSADOR SHERER FELT STRONGLY THAT CHNOUPEK VISIT SHOULD BE BOTH SEPARATE SBJIRUB ATTENDANCE AT UNGA AND SUBSTANTIVE IN NATURE. WE THEREFORE URGE THAT DEPARTMENT CONSUL WITH HIM IN PLANNING FOR VISIT.
PERRY

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